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UNCLAS VATICAN 001300

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EUR/WE LEVIN; WHA/CCA; EAP/CM; DRL-IRF; IO/SHA

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: HOLY SEE RECEPTIVE TO U.S. CONCERNS ON CHINA AND CUBA HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: STATE 41252

(SBU) POST SHARED REFTTEL POINTS WITH ETTORE BALESTRERO, HOLY SEE'S DIRECTOR FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES APRIL 1. BALESTRERO SAID THAT THE HOLY SEE DID NOT TYPICALLY TAKE AN OFFICIAL POSITION ON RESOLUTIONS CRITICIZING THE RECORDS OF PARTICULAR COUNTRIES. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID, THE VATICAN REMAINED CONCERNED ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN BOTH CUBA AND CHINA -- PARTICULARLY REGARDING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM -- AND WAS SYMPATHETIC TO USG CONCERNS. BALESTRERO PROMISED THAT THE HOLY SEE WOULD TAKE U.S. CONCERNS INTO ACCOUNT IN ITS DISCUSSIONS ON BOTH CUBA AND CHINA WITH INTERESTED COUNTRIES.

NICHOLSON

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2004VATICA01300 - Classification: UNCLASSIFIED